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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 001039

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [EWWT](#) [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PINS](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: DRC ATTEMPTS TO KEEP PORTS AFLOAT

REF: A. 04 KINSHASA 1251

[B](#). KINSHASA 315

Classified By: Econoff Wendy Brafman, for Reasons 1.4 b/d.

[1](#). (U) Summary: The GDRC is increasing its efforts to bring its maritime ports into compliance with international security standards in response to U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) sanctions that became effective May 23. The USCG now requires inspection of all ships that enter U.S. ports within five ports of call of the DRC. The DRC and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) claim that the DRC ports are now generally in compliance but for minor administrative measures, but the USCG must inspect the ports before sanctions can be withdrawn. Further, ONATRA (the DRC's port authority) needs additional funds to complete a second required round of security upgrades. Communication problems, insufficient training and lack of equipment are obstacles to full implementation of required security measures. Post is encouraging the USCG to visit the DRC's ports to verify compliance status and give technical advice. End Summary.

COAST GUARD ISSUED SANCTIONS

[1](#)2. (SBU) In mid-May, Post informed the Ministry of Transport and ONATRA of the USCG's restrictions on ships entering the U.S. May 23 or later, pursuant to USCG Security Advisory (1-05). Over the past year, the DRC has worked with post, ONATRA, its parent Ministry of Transport, the USCG and the IMO to comply with the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS) (see ref tel A). The USCG requires that the DRC report ISPS code implementation to the IMO to confirm that it has enacted anti-terrorism measures, and the USCG must inspect the ports to confirm compliance. The DRC failed to comply in a timely manner with the requirements. Hence, before port entry, the USCG must now inspect all ships that have visited any DRC port within five ports. The American company Seaboard/Midema told Econoff that additional security will cost it \$1500 per day per ship, plus the cost of delay during pre-entry inspection. Econoff has advised the GDRC that, if it does not achieve compliance within six months, the USCG will completely prohibit the entry of ships that have visited any DRC port within five ports.

DRC SAYS IT IS NEARLY IN COMPLIANCE

[1](#)3. (U) IMO and the DRC now state that the ports' currently required compliance is complete but for administrative details. However, the USCG has not yet suspended its determination, because it does not have the necessary confirmation from IMO. Econoff discussed the status of compliance with IMO and DRC officials, including the DRC's Director of Maritime Security, representatives from the national police, customs and immigrations services, all security officers from all ISPS-registered ports, and the Bas-Congo provincial Vice Governor for Finance and Economy, during Emboffs' visit to the Port of Matadi June 2-3. There is visible progress in Matadi, the DRC's primary port; ONATRA has installed access gates and appears to control strictly the access into the primary security zone. Further, the IMO says that the DRC's IMO representative has informed the Washington, D.C.-based USCG representative of compliance status.

[1](#)4. (C) However, as of early June, the DRC had not submitted port facility security plans for four of eight ports; the DRC can withdraw these as designated international ports, however. Further, an experienced Midema ship captain in Matadi told Econoff that, although physical security improvements have resulted in the exclusion of unapproved persons at port and shipboard, port officials do not conduct thorough security and health inspections, due to inadequate training and lack of adequate communication. For example, he stated that he was unable to reach the port facility security officer upon entering the port, as the ISPS requires.

ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES REMAIN

[1](#)5. (U) Discussions with DRC officials and Econoffs' visit to the port reveal that inadequate funding, poor inter- and intra-ministerial communication and lack of adequate training and equipment may hamper full upgrade completion. For example, Econoff advised DRC's Budget, Plan and Finance

Ministries of the sanctions and of funding needs; they, like ONATRA and the Transport Ministry, were unaware of the sanctions and stated they did not know the amount ONATRA needed to complete security upgrades. ONATRA is aware of its general funding needs for continued upgrades, such as the purchase of video monitoring equipment, but it is uncertain how to obtain those funds from the appropriate ministries. Port security officials are also unaware of all the precise steps that remain to complete security upgrades. For example, ONATRA did not understand that it had failed to send all necessary information to IMO, although it did so after Econoff advised of the USCG sanctions.

16. (SBU) To address these obstacles, the GDRC is taking steps to form an inter-ministerial ISPS Commission, and is awaiting a Presidential decree to proceed. Further, a South African consultant is now working with port security officials, although it is unclear if it is in an official capacity yet. The consultant told the USCG that the advice that the DRC received from the prior Belgian consultant is a European security solution that would be difficult to implement and maintain in the DRC.

17. (C) Post has encouraged the USCG to inspect the DRC's ports to verify compliance and provide technical assistance with continuing upgrades. The USCG is willing to visit, and we are hoping for a visit no later than September. Post has also suggested that ONATRA speak to a variety of DRC public and private entities that may provide funding support. Further, in May Post discussed the port security issue with the World Bank (WB) Country Director for South-Central and Great Lakes Africa regions, Pedro Alba. Alba said he is interested in investigating the possibility of funding the security upgrades. The WB has already provided the DRC funds for general port infrastructure rehabilitation through its Emergency Multisector Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Project. Further, the DRC states that South Africa and The Netherlands have promised to provide video controls and telecommunications tools for port security.

COMMENT

18. (C) Although it is unclear if DRC's ports are currently in compliance, it is evident that DRC officials now take this issue seriously, though it is unfortunate that it required sanctions to get attention at the ministerial level. (See reftel B). Aside from a lack of funding, communication appears to be the primary obstacle to the DRC's progress. In particular, ONATRA management must better inform pertinent internal actors, such as its port security officers, and more effectively report to decision makers and funding ministries. The creation of the ISPS Commission is a positive step. Additionally, DRC port officials must more effectively leverage the IMO representation so that the DRC and the USCG have accurate, current information. At least in the near term, Post will need to continue to ensure that the relevant officials remain informed and committed to continued port security improvement.

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